# Reading Task: Narrative Text Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Title: “The Death Car”

# Before Reading

*Students will:*

1. use appropriate strategies to discover the meaning of unfamiliar and technical words encountered in their reading;
2. use appropriate strategies to activate and build on prior knowledge of the content of the informational, narrative, or graphic selections (e.g., brainstorm about a topic).

# Before Reading Activities

## Activity 1

Introduce, discuss, define, and post the following words:

## Activity 2

Large group discussion:

Prompts:

1. What urban legends do you already know?

2. Can you think of stories that are not totally believable but that you have been led to believe are true?

# Reading Task

**Expectations**

This task gives students the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of all or part of each of the following selected expectations.

*Students will:*

1. demonstrate the ability to read independently for personal, school-related, and career-related purposes (e.g., by writing a response to a text);
2. use appropriate strategies to make inferences about and interpret different types of texts;
3. make connections between personal experiences and the content of texts to consolidate and extend understanding of different types of texts, including narrative texts (e.g., compare a decision made by a person in a narrative with the choice they would have made in the same situation);
4. demonstrate the ability to read and respond to a variety of texts;
5. use knowledge of the organizational structure of different types of non-fiction narrative and short fiction to identify sequence of events and main ideas.

**The Death Car**

      It was a cold night in September. The rain was drumming on the car roof as George and Marie Winston drove through the empty country roads towards the house of their friends, the Harrisons, where they were going to attend a party to celebrate the engagement of the Harrisons' daughter, Lisa. As they drove, they listened to the local radio station, which was playing classical music.  
      They were about five miles from their destination when the music on the radio was interrupted by a news announcement:  
      "The Cheshire police have issued a serious warning after a man escaped from Colford Mental Hospital earlier this evening. The man, John Downey, is a murderer who killed six people before he was captured two years ago. He is described as large, very strong and extremely dangerous. People in the Cheshire area are warned to keep their doors and windows locked, and to call the police immediately if they see anyone acting strangely."  
      Marie shivered. "A crazy killer. And he's out there somewhere. That's scary."  
      "Don't worry about it," said her husband. "We're nearly there now. Anyway, we have more important things to worry about. This car is losing power for some reason -- it must be that old problem with the carburetor. If it gets any worse, we'll have to stay at the Harrisons' tonight and get it fixed before we travel back tomorrow."  
      As he spoke, the car began to slow down. George pressed the accelerator, but the engine only coughed. Finally they rolled to a halt, as the engine died completely. Just as they stopped, George pulled the car off the road, and it came to rest under a large tree.  
      "Blast!" said George angrily. "Now we'll have to walk in the rain."  
      "But that'll take us an hour at least," said Marie. "And I have my high-heeled shoes and my nice clothes on. They'll be ruined!"  
      "Well, you'll have to wait while I run to the nearest house and call the Harrisons. Someone can come out and pick us up," said George.  
      "But George! Have you forgotten what the radio said? There's a homicidal maniac out there! You can't leave me alone here!"  
      "You'll have to hide in the back of the car. Lock all the doors and lie on the floor in the back, under this blanket. No one will see you. When I come back, I'll knock three times on the door. Then you can get up and open it. Don't open it unless you hear three knocks." George opened the door and slipped out into the rain. He quickly disappeared into the blackness.  
      Marie quickly locked the doors and settled down under the blanket in the back for a long wait. She was frightened and worried, but she was a strong-minded woman. She had not been waiting long, however, when she heard a strange scratching noise. It seemed to be coming from the roof of the car.  
      Marie was terrified. She listened, holding her breath. Then she heard three slow knocks, one after the other, also on the roof of the car. Was it her husband? Should she open the door? Then she heard another knock, and another. This was not her husband. It was somebody -- or something -- else. She was shaking with fear, but she forced herself to lie still. The knocking continued -- bump, bump, bump, bump.  
      Many hours later, as the sun rose, she was still lying there. She had not slept for a moment. The knocking had never stopped, all night long. She did not know what to do. Where was George? Why had he not come for her?  
      Suddenly, she heard the sound of three or four vehicles, racing quickly down the road. All of them pulled up around her, their tires screeching on the road. At last! Someone had come! Marie sat up quickly and looked out of the window.  
      The three vehicles were all police cars, and two still had their lights flashing. Several policemen leapt out. One of them rushed towards the car as Marie opened the door. He took her by the hand.  
      "Get out of the car and walk with me to the police vehicle, miss. You're safe now. Look straight ahead. Keep looking at the police car. Don't look back. Just don't look back."  
      Something in the way he spoke filled Marie with cold horror. She could not help herself. About ten yards from the police car, she stopped, turned and looked back at the empty vehicle.  
      George was hanging from the tree above the car, a rope tied around his neck. As the wind blew his body back and forth, his feet were bumping gently on the roof of the car -- bump, bump, bump, bump.  
  
(<http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/courses/elc/studyzone/410/reading/deathcar.htm> and from a common urban legend)

**Questions on “The Death Car”**

**Directly stated ideas and Information: PART A: MULTIPLE CHOICE**

1. Where were the Winstons going when this incident happened?
   1. home
   2. to Colford Mental Hospital
   3. to a party
   4. to the police station
2. What was the reason for the news announcement on the radio?
   1. Six people, including John Downey, had been murdered.
   2. A dangerous prisoner had escaped.
   3. The police were warning of accidents on the roads in the bad weather.
   4. Some people had been seen acting strangely in the Cheshire area.
3. What did George think was causing the trouble with the car?
   1. the carburetor
   2. the rain drumming on the roof
   3. the accelerator
   4. he had no idea
4. Why did he pull the car off the road?
   1. to have a rest
   2. to go for a walk
   3. to walk to the nearest house
   4. it broke down
5. Why did Marie stay in the car when George left?
   1. She was afraid to go out in the dark.
   2. So no one would steal the car.
   3. Her clothes weren't suitable for the rain.
   4. She wanted to get some sleep.
6. Where did George set off to walk to?
   1. the Mental Hospital
   2. the nearest house
   3. the Harrisons' house
   4. the police station
7. What made Marie so frightened as she waited in the car?
   1. There was a strange sound coming from the roof.
   2. She could see a man acting strangely outside the car.
   3. Some police cars came racing down the road.
   4. She was afraid of the rain and the dark.

**Make sure you answer the following in full sentences. Anything without full sentences will be returned to you to complete.**

**INDIRECTLY STATED IDEAS AND INFORMATION:**

1. Why did the policeman tell Marie not to look back when he brought her out of the car?
2. a) Marie says, "There's a homicidal maniac out there!" What does "homicidal maniac" mean?

b) Why would Marie be fearful of a “homicidal maniac”?

**MAKING CONNECTIONS:**

1. Step “into the shoes” of either Marie or George. Explain how he/she might have dealt with the situation differently.
2. Identify two parts of the story that are not believable. What other options would you provide that would have solved the issue in that part of the story?
3. Do you think this story could have actually happened? Why or why not?

**WRITING EXTENSION:**

13. Your task is to summarize the story you have read. Include only the most important details of the story, and try to make your summary less than 100 words.

**Rubric for “The Death Car” Narrative Text**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Categories** | **Guiding Questions** | **Approaching the Required Level (0-49%)** | **Achieving the Required Level (50-64%)** | **Exceeding the Required Level (65-79%)** | **Significantly Exceeding the Required Level (80-100%)** |
| **Knowledge/ Understanding** | | | | | |
| - understanding of text  - understanding of the importance of reading and writing skills for learning in all subjects and for showing own understanding | - have I read the entire piece twice?  - have I used full sentences in each answer?  - have I reread my answers to make sure they make sense? | - demonstrates limited understanding | - demonstrates adequate understanding | - demonstrates considerable understanding | - demonstrates thorough understanding |
| **Thinking/Inquiry** | | | | | |
| - have I shown critical and creative thinking skills by making inferences | - have I made guesses based on my own knowledge in the indirect question section?  - have I clearly explained my answers using words from the text? | - demonstrates limited competence in using critical and creative thinking skills | - demonstrates adequate competence in using critical and creative thinking skills | - demonstrates considerable competence in using critical and creative thinking skills | - demonstrates a high degree of competence in using critical and creative thinking skills |
| **Communication** | | | | | |
| - use of various forms of communication (ie, written answers, speeches, news reports, etc) | - have I used written answers and a speech to communicate | - demonstrates limited command of the various forms | - demonstrates adequate command of the various forms | - demonstrates considerable command of the various forms | - demonstrates a high degree of command of the various forms |
| **Application** | | | | | |
| - application of required language conventions  - application of literacy skills in new contexts | - have I or someone else proofread my work?  - have I thought about how an angry travelled would speak before I wrote my speech?  - have I used words that convey the anger and frustration of a traveler in a foreign country? | - uses the required language conventions with limited accuracy and effectiveness  - uses literacy skills in new context with limited effectiveness | - uses the required language conventions with moderate accuracy and effectiveness  - uses literacy skills in new context with moderate effectiveness | - uses the required language conventions with considerable accuracy and effectiveness  - uses literacy skills in new context with considerable effectiveness | - uses the required language conventions with a high degree of accuracy and effectiveness  - uses literacy skills in new context with a high degree of effectiveness |

Your Perceived Level: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Overall Level: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please check the level you believed you have achieved: Teacher Evaluation

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Learning Skills** | **N** | **S** | **G** | **E** |  | **Level** |
| Manages own behaviour, fulfills responsibility (Responsibility) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Submitted assignment on due date (Organization) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Completed assignment with care (Independent Work) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Accepts roles, responds positively to peers, etc (Collaboration) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sought peer help in editing rough work (Initiative) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sets own goals & monitors achievement (Self-regulation) |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**MC Answers:**

1. Where were the Winstons going when this incident happened?
   1. orrect  to a party
2. What was the reason for the news announcement on the radio?
   1. orrect  A dangerous prisoner had escaped.
3. What did George think was causing the trouble with the car?
   1. orrect  the carburetor
4. Why did he pull the car off the road?
   1. orrect  it broke down
5. Why did Marie stay in the car when George left?
   1. orrect  Her clothes weren't suitable for the rain.
6. Where did George set off to walk to?
   1. orrect  the nearest house
7. What made Marie so frightened as she waited in the car?
   1. orrect  There was a strange sound coming from the roof.
8. Why did the policeman tell her not to look back when he brought her out of the car?
   1. orrect  He didn't want her to see the body of her husband.
9. Marie says, "There's a homicidal maniac out there!" What does "homicidal maniac" mean?
   1. orrect  crazy killer